



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 4, 2003

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BE AWARE OF ASBESTOS, OTHER TOXIC SUBSTANCES WHEN CLEANING UP

Contractors, Homeowners Warned to Take Precautions When Removing Ash, Debris

The San Diego County Air Pollution Control District (APCD) warns contractors and homeowners to take precautions before demolishing fire-damaged structures or cleaning up ash.

Buildings may have been constructed with materials that contain asbestos – though most structures built since 1980 should have little if any asbestos.

“There also may be other hazardous substances in ash and debris that can be released in the air in the form of fine particles when handled,” says Dick Smith, director, APCD.

APCD is waiving notification and other administrative requirements and fees for all wildfire-related demolitions and debris removal activities at multi-unit residential structures (such as apartment buildings) and at commercial and industrial structures. Routine demolition and renovation activities are NOT included in this special waiver. For more information, check the APCD Web site at www.sdapcd.san-diego.ca.us or call (858) 650-4550.

Use common sense precautions on demolition sites, including:

- Use a tight-fitting particulate mask designed to protect your respiratory system from very fine particles.
- Wear protective glasses or goggles, and protect skin with gloves, long sleeves and long pants. Bag clothing after use and launder before re-use.
- Dampen debris/ash to reduce dust until it has been placed in sealed or closed containers. Wet down structures being demolished. Line bulk containers with heavy duty plastic (e.g. polysheeting) that can be used to completely wrap the debris and ash.
- DO NOT USE LEAF BLOWERS TO CLEAN UP RESIDUAL ASH, DIRT AND DEBRIS.
- Check with your waste-disposal company, with the County Department of Environmental Health or your city on where wildfire ash and debris are being accepted for disposal. The Ramona, Otay, Sycamore and Miramar landfills have been authorized to accept this waste.

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1600 PACIFIC HIGHWAY, ROOM 208 • SAN DIEGO, CA 92101



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